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Mr. Kennedy Obtains Independent Advice

President Kennedy has injected a strong personality into the White House staff by the selection of Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor as his military adviser. A professional soldier, he also has been an educator, an intelligence expert, and something of a goodwill figure about the globe.

Gen. Taylor has been critical recently of organization of defense forces and changes in the Pentagon can be foreseen, although the official announcement of his appointment avoided that connotation. The general frequently has displayed an independence of thought about the current organization of the armed forces, which conflicts with a setup he devised while in power. A consequent deduction is that President Kennedy may feel the urge for another change at the Pentagon.

It is doubtful that Gen. Taylor will supersede the existing command, regardless of overhaul; his role will be that of liaison between White House and Pentagon.

The general's experience in intelligence and his wide knowledge of other lands and his contacts suggest that he will give attention to that

phase of our national defense. The recent general criticism of the Central Intelligence Agency and the impending retirement of its director, Allen Dulles, open the way for an overhauling, both in personnel and policy. Mr. Kennedy's interest in that arm of the government probably will be expressed now through Gen. Taylor, directly or covertly, as conditions dictate.

Muffled grumbling in Washington, doubtless reflecting attitudes in the Pentagon and other offices preferring the status quo, indicate that a shakeup is feared. The President has disturbed the command of national forces little in the few months he has been commander-in-chief, which does not preclude that action and could account for the appearance of Gen. Taylor at the White House.

The President has had time to appraise the defense organization and to decide whether or not it conforms to his concept of preparedness and efficiency. If not, he has both the privilege and the obligation for a overhaul. The burden of responsibility rests upon him and now he has an obviously independent and qualified adviser.